

### Regents Address UC Policy Revisions

By Yelena Akopian

[UC San Diego Guardian](#): Determined to open the University of California to a larger and more diverse group of applicants, the UC Board of Regents met yesterday in San Francisco to discuss changes to various freshmen eligibility standards, as well as a new financial-aid plan.

At the meeting, held at UC San Francisco from Feb. 3 to Feb. 5, the Committee on Educational Policy voted unanimously eliminate the SAT II as a requirement for freshman eligibility. The changes would go into effect for the incoming class of 2012.

If approved by the full Board of Regents today, the complex plan will also create an “entitled to review” applicant pool, inviting those not guaranteed admission by current standards to apply and receive a comprehensive review of their application.

The comprehensive review process takes into consideration criteria other than grades and test scores, such as an applicant’s special talents and abilities, as well as life experiences and special circumstances. The Academic Senate estimates that students admitted to the university in this manner would make up approximately 2.5 percent of their incoming class.

If approved, the plan will decrease the statewide guaranteed-admissions rate from the top 12.5 percent of students in California to the top 9 percent, while the rate based on students’ ranking within their high-school graduating class would increase from the top 4 percent to the top 9 percent.

The plan would restrict the admission guarantee in the former pool of applicants while expanding the latter, and would enable an estimated 21.7 percent of graduating seniors to receive full review of their applications, in contrast with the 13.4 percent who were eligible in 2007.

UC Board of Regents Chair Richard Blum said that eliminating the SAT II requirement from the freshman application process would enable qualified candidates to apply to the university who would not otherwise be eligible.

“We are talking about thousands of students who have GPAs over 3.5 [who] are not in the top 12.5 percent [of high school seniors graduating in California] because they are ineligible,” Blum said. “We need a policy construct that will extend the benefit of a full review for more than 12.5 percent, which is about 21 percent.”

The meeting also saw the Educational Policy Committee vote to approve a new financial-aid policy, entitled the Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan, which would guarantee enough grant and scholarship funds to cover the system-wide fees of every undergraduate whose annual household income falls below the California median of \$60,000.

Yudof backed the policy by claiming it will both increase transparency in the financial-aid process and encourage low-income students to apply.

“The Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan offers a straightforward financial-aid message to reassure low-income students and families that UC is financially accessible, especially during these tough economic times,” Yudof said.

Later in the meeting, Yudof said the planned UC Merced medical school should be built as quickly as possible and gave the green light to an accelerated medical-school program, proposed by Lt. Gov. John Garamendi, which would institute a five-year program to train much-needed physicians for the San Joaquin Valley, which has the least access to physicians per capita of any region in California.